

CLAIMS

We claim:

- 1  
2 1. A method for a central server to manage remote monitoring tasks, comprising:  
3 receiving a request from a user of a user device to monitor a remote location;  
4 determining a remote location to be monitored;  
5 enabling communication between a sensor at the remote location and the user  
6 device; and  
7 crediting value to the user in accordance with an amount of time the user  
8 device has been in communication with the sensor for remote monitoring purposes.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the user device is at least one of a personal  
2 computer and a television set.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the request includes an account identifier.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the request includes a task identifier.

1           5.     The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:  
2                 determining a shift for monitoring the remote location; and wherein the step of  
3     enabling communication between the sensor and the user device occurs at approximately a  
4     start of the shift.

1           6.     The method of claim 5 wherein the shift includes a date and a time.

1           7.     The method of claim 1 wherein an identity of the remote location is not  
2     communicated to the user.

1           8.     The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of registering the user to  
2     monitor remote locations.

1           9.     The method of claim 1 wherein communication between the sensor and the  
2     user device involves the Internet.

1           10.    The method of claim 1 wherein communication between the sensor and the  
2     user device includes at least one of video communication and audio communication.

1           11.    The method of claim 1 wherein the step of crediting value includes crediting a  
2 financial account.

1           12.    The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:  
2               determining whether predetermined criteria have been satisfied prior to  
3 enabling communication between the sensor and the user device.

1           13.    The method of claim 12 wherein the predetermined criteria includes a  
2 minimum number of users to monitor the remote location.

1           14.    The method of claim 12 wherein the predetermined criteria includes a user  
2 rating.

1           15.    The method of claim 5 further comprising the steps of:  
2               disabling communication between the sensor at the remote location and the  
3 user; and  
4               enabling communication between a sensor at a second remote location and the  
5 user,  
6               wherein the steps of disabling and enabling occur during the shift.

1           16.    The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:  
2                   transmitting a test communication to the user at the user device; and  
3                   determining whether a response to the test communication is received within a  
4   predetermined period of time.

1           17.    The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of:  
2                   updating a user rating based on the response.

1           18.    The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:  
2                   outputting an offer to the user at the user device to enter the user in a  
3   sweepstakes; and  
4                   receiving a response to the offer.

1           19.    The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:  
2                   entering the user in the sweepstakes.

1           20.    The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:  
2                   transmitting entertainment video to the user at the user device.

1           21.    The method of claim 20 wherein entertainment video is transmitted to the user  
2 at random times.

1           22.    The method of claim 20 wherein entertainment video is transmitted to the user  
2 for random durations.

1           23.    The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:  
2                   receiving from the user device notification of an emergency at the remote  
3 location; and  
4                   contacting a third party in response to the received notification.

1           24.    The method of claim 23 wherein the third party is contacted by telephone.

1           25.    The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:  
2                   determining a pay rate; and  
3                   crediting value to the user in accordance with the pay rate.

1           26.    The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:  
2                    receiving from the user device notification of an emergency at the remote  
3   location, and wherein the step of crediting value to the user includes paying a bonus for each  
4   legitimate emergency detected by the user.

1           27.    A method for a central server to manage remote monitoring tasks, comprising:  
2                    assigning to a user of a data network a remote monitoring task including a  
3   remote location to monitor and a shift for monitoring the remote location; and  
4                    providing the user with information relating to the remote monitoring task, the  
5   information to be transmitted by the user to the central server at approximately a start of the  
6   shift.

1           28.    The method of claim 27 wherein the information comprises at least one of an  
2   account identifier, a task identifier and the shift.

1           29.    The method of claim 27 wherein the data network is the Internet.

1           30.    The method of claim 27 wherein the data network is a cable television  
2   network.

1           31.    The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:  
2                   determining whether predetermined criteria have been satisfied prior to  
3 providing the user with the information to be transmitted to the central server.

1           32.    The method of claim 31 wherein the predetermined criteria includes a user  
2 rating.

1           33.    The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:  
2                   preventing the user from monitoring a remote location that is within a  
3 predetermined distance from the user's address.

1           34.    The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:  
2                   preventing the user from monitoring a remote location more than a  
3 predetermined number of times.

1           35.    The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:  
2                   preventing the user from monitoring a remote location during a predetermined  
3 period of time.

1           36.    The method of claim 27 wherein the step of assigning a remote monitoring  
2 task is based on user-specified preferences concerning the shift.

1           37.    The method of claim 27 further comprising the steps of:  
2                   determining an emergency procedure to be followed by the user in the event  
3 the user detects an emergency at the remote location; and  
4                   transmitting the emergency procedure to the user.

1           38.    The method of claim 37 wherein the emergency procedure includes a  
2 procedure for contacting a third party.

1           39.    The method of claim 38 wherein the third party is contacted by telephone.

1           40.    The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:  
2                   reminding the user of the remote monitoring task prior to a start of the shift.

1           41.    A method for a central server to manage remote monitoring tasks, comprising:  
2                   determining a remote location to be monitored;



3 enabling communication between a sensor at the remote location and a  
4 plurality of users of a data network;

5 determining an amount of time each user of the plurality of users has  
6 monitored the remote location; and

7 crediting value to each user of the plurality of users for monitoring the remote  
8 location in accordance with the amount of time that each user has monitored the remote  
9 location.

1 42. The method of claim 41 further comprising the steps of:  
2 determining a shift for monitoring the remote location; and wherein the step of  
3 enabling communication between the sensor and the plurality of users occurs at  
4 approximately a start of the shift.

1 43. The method of claim 41 further comprising the step of:  
2 recruiting users to monitor the remote location.

1 44. The method of claim 41 further comprising the step of:  
2 informing a user of the plurality of users that he is the only user monitoring  
3 the remote location.

1           45.     The method of claim 41 further comprising the steps of:  
2                   receiving notification of an emergency at the remote location from a first user  
3 of the plurality of users; and  
4                   contacting a third party if at least a predetermined amount of the plurality of  
5 users reports the emergency.

1           46.     The method of claim 45 further comprising the step of:  
2                   informing a second user of the plurality of users of the notification of the  
3 emergency at the remote location.

1 SUBA 2 47.     A method for a central server to manage remote monitoring tasks, comprising:  
2                   receiving a request from a user of a user device to monitor a remote location in  
3 exchange for value;  
4                   determining a remote location to be monitored;  
5                   enabling communication between a sensor at the remote location and the user  
6 device; and  
7                   measuring user attentiveness while the user device is in communication with  
8 the sensor.

1           48.     The method of claim 47 wherein the user device is a personal computer.

1           49.     The method of claim 47 further comprising the step of:  
2                     determining a shift for monitoring the remote location; and wherein the step of  
3     enabling communication between the sensor and the user device occurs at approximately a  
4     start of the shift.

1           50.     The method of claim 47 further comprising the step of:  
2                     determining whether predetermined criteria have been satisfied prior to  
3     enabling communication between the sensor and the user device.

1           51.     The method of claim 50, wherein the predetermined criteria includes a  
2     minimum user rating required to monitor the remote location.

1           52.     The method of claim 51, wherein the minimum user rating is based on  
2     measured user attentiveness.

1           53.     The method of claim 47 further comprising the step of crediting value to a  
2     financial account of the user for monitoring the remote location.

1           54.    The method of claim 47 wherein the step of measuring user attentiveness  
2 includes:  
3               transmitting a test communication to the user at the user device; and  
4               determining whether a response to the test communication has been received  
5 within a predetermined period of time.

1           55.    The method of claim 54 wherein the test communication is a predetermined  
2 video of an emergency.

1           56.    The method of claim 54 wherein the test communication is a query.

1           57.    The method of claim 54 further comprising the step of:  
2               determining whether the response is an expected response.

1           58.    The method of claim 47 wherein the step of measuring user attentiveness  
2 includes:  
3               receiving a biometric measurement of the user.

1           59.    The method of claim 58 wherein the biometric measurement is a retinal scan.

1           60.    The method of claim 47 wherein the step of measuring user attentiveness  
2 includes the step of:

3                   enabling a second user to monitor the user monitoring the remote location.

1           61.    The method of claim 47 further comprising the step of causing an audible  
2 alarm to be transmitted to the user at the user device if the user is not attentive.

1           62.    The method of claim 47 further comprising the step of:  
2                   penalizing the user if the user is not attentive.

1           63.    The method of claim 62 wherein the step of penalizing the user includes  
2 paying the user only if the user is attentive.

1           64.    The method of claim 62 wherein the step of penalizing the user includes  
2 crediting an account of the user an amount that is less than if the user had been attentive.

1           65.    The method of claim 62 wherein the step of penalizing the user includes  
2 charging an account of the user.

1           66.    The method of claim 62 wherein the step of penalizing the user includes  
2 preventing future monitoring by the user.

1           67.    The method of claim 47 further comprising the steps of:  
2                determining whether the user is attentive; and  
3                if the user is not attentive, replacing the user with an alternate user to monitor  
4 the remote location.

1 SUB 3 68.    A method for alerting a user of a computer of an emergency at a remotely  
2 monitored location, comprising:  
3                maintaining the computer in communication with a sensor at the remotely  
4 monitored location;  
5                transmitting a signal indicative of a predetermined event detected by the  
6 sensor to the computer; and  
7                transmitting video data from a camera at the remotely monitored location to  
8 the computer,  
9                wherein the signal causes the computer to preempt a program unrelated to  
10 remote monitoring to display the video data.

1           69.    The method of claim 68 wherein the step of maintaining the computer in  
2 communication with the remote sensor is performed via a browser.

1           70.     The method of claim 68 wherein the program is a word processor.

1           71.     The method of claim 68 wherein the predetermined event includes at least one  
2 of a predetermined level of motion, sound, pressure and light intensity.

1           72.     A method for alerting an individual of an emergency at a remote location,  
2 comprising:  
3                 transmitting a signal indicative of a predetermined event detected by a sensor  
4 at the remote location to a television set; and  
5                 transmitting video data from a camera at the remote location to the television  
6 set,  
7                 wherein the signal causes the television set to preempt a television program to  
8 display the video data.

1           73.     The method of claim 72 wherein the predetermined event includes at least one  
2 of a predetermined level of motion, sound, pressure and light intensity.

1           74.    The method of claim 73 further comprising the step of transmitting a signal to  
2   the television set to sound an alarm to inform the user of the predetermined event detected at  
3   the sensor.

1   75.    A method for a user of a data network to monitor remote locations in exchange  
2   for value:  
3           receiving a data stream generated by a sensor at a remote location;  
4           monitoring the data stream for an amount of time; and  
5           receiving credit to a user account for monitoring the data stream for that  
6   amount of time.

1           76.    The method of claim 75 further comprising the step of transmitting an account  
2   identifier to the central server.

1           77.    The method of claim 75 further comprising the step of providing a task  
2   identifier to the central server.

1           78.    The method of claim 75 wherein the data network is the Internet.



1           79.    The method of claim 75 wherein the data stream comprises at least one of a  
2 video data stream and an audio data stream.

1           80.    The method of claim 75 wherein the credit is monetary.

1           81.    The method of claim 75 wherein the data stream comprises a plurality of data  
2 streams.

1           82.    The method of claim 81 wherein the step of monitoring comprises monitoring  
2 the plurality of data streams substantially simultaneously.

1           83.    The method of claim 75 wherein the step of monitoring the data stream  
2 includes the step of monitoring for an emergency at the remote location.

1           84.    The method of claim 83 further comprising the step of notifying the central  
2 server in the event an emergency is detected.

1           85.    The method of claim 75 further comprising the steps of:  
2                    receiving a predetermined video of an emergency; and  
3                    responding to the predetermined video of an emergency within a  
4 predetermined period of time.

1           86.    The method of claim 75 further comprising the steps of:  
2                    receiving queries; and  
3                    responding to the queries within a predetermined period of time.

1           87.    A method for alerting a user of a computer of an emergency at a remotely  
2 monitored location, comprising:  
3                    maintaining communication with a remote sensor via a central server;  
4                    running a program on the computer, wherein the program is unrelated to  
5 remote monitoring; and  
6                    pre-empting the program if a predetermined event is detected by the remote  
7 sensor.

1           88.    The method of claim 87 wherein the step of maintaining communication with  
2 a remote sensor is performed via a browser.

1           89.    The method of claim 87 wherein said predetermined event includes a  
2 predetermined level of motion or sound.

1           90.    The method of claim 87 further comprising the step of:  
2 receiving video data from a camera at the remotely monitored location, and  
3 wherein the step of preempting includes displaying the video data.

1           91.    A method for a television set to alert an individual of an emergency at a  
2 remote location, comprising:  
3 receiving a signal indicative of a predetermined event detected by a sensor at  
4 the remote location; and  
5 in response to the signal, preempting a television program to display video  
6 data received from a camera at the remote location.

1           92.    The method of claim 91 wherein the predetermined event includes at least one  
2 of a predetermined level of motion, sound, pressure and light intensity.

1           93.    The method of claim 92 further comprising the step of sounding an alarm to  
2 inform the user of the predetermined event having been detected by the remote sensor.

1 94. A system for managing remote monitoring tasks comprising:  
2 a memory device;  
3 a processor in communication with the memory device; and  
4 the processor configured to:  
5 receive a request from a user of a user device to monitor a remote location;  
6 determine a remote location to be monitored;  
7 enable communication between a sensor at the remote location and the user  
8 device; and  
9 credit value to the user in accordance with an amount of time the user device  
10 has been in communication with the sensor.

1 SUB A5 } 95. The system of claim 94 wherein the user devices is a personal computer.

1 96. The system of claim 94 wherein the request includes an account identifier.

1 97. The system of claim 94 wherein the request includes a task identifier.

1 98. The system of claim 94 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2 determine a shift for monitoring the remote location and wherein the processor enables  
3 communication between the sensor and the user device at approximately a start of the shift.

1            99.    The system of claim 94 wherein the processor is further configured to register  
2 the user to monitor remote locations.

1            100.   The system of claim 94 wherein communication between the sensor and the  
2 user device involves the Internet.

1            101.   The system of claim 94 wherein communication between the sensor and the  
2 user device includes at least one of video communication and audio communication.

1            102.   The system of claim 94 wherein processor is further configured to determine  
2 whether predetermined criteria have been satisfied prior to enabling communication between  
3 the sensor and the user device.

1            103.   The system of claim 102 wherein the predetermined criteria includes a  
2 minimum number of users to monitor the remote location.

1           104. The system of claim 102 wherein the predetermined criteria includes a  
2 minimum user rating.

1           105. The system of claim 98 wherein the processor is further configured to disable  
2 communication between the sensor at the remote location and the user; and enable  
3 communication between a sensor at a second remote location and the user during the shift.

1           106. The system of claim 94 wherein the processor is further configured to transmit  
2 a test communication to the user at the user device; and determine whether a response to the  
3 test communication is received within a predetermined period of time.

1           107. The system of claim 106 wherein the processor is further configured to update  
2 a user rating based on the response.

1           108. The system of claim 94 wherein the processor is further configured to output  
2 an offer to the user at the user device to enter the user in a sweepstakes; and receive a  
3 response to the offer.

1           109.   The method of claim 108 further comprising the step of:  
2                   entering the user in the sweepstakes.

1           110.   The system of claim 94 wherein the processor is further configured to transmit  
2   entertainment video to the user at the user device.

1           111.   The method of claim 110 wherein entertainment video is transmitted to the  
2   user at random times.

1           112.   The method of claim 110 wherein entertainment video is transmitted to the  
2   user for random durations.

1           113.   The system of claim 94 wherein the processor is further configured to receive  
2   from the user device notification of an emergency at the remote location; and contact a third  
3   party in response to the received notification.

1           114.   The system of claim 94 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2   determine a pay rate; and credit value to the user in accordance with the pay rate.

1 115. The system of claim 114 wherein value is credited to a financial account.

1 116. The system of claim 94 wherein the processor is further configured to receive  
2 from the user device notification of an emergency at the remote location, and pay a bonus for  
3 each legitimate emergency detected by the user.

1 SUB 6) 117. A system for managing remote monitoring tasks comprising:  
2 a memory device;  
3 a processor in communication with the memory device;  
4 and the processor configured to:  
5 assign to a user of a data network a remote monitoring task including a remote  
6 location to monitor and a shift for monitoring the remote location; and  
7 provide the user with information relating to the remote monitoring task, the  
8 information to be transmitted by the user to the central server at approximately a start of the  
9 shift.

1 118. The system of claim 117 wherein the information comprises at least one of an  
2 account identifier, a task identifier and the shift.



1           119. The system of claim 117 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2 determine whether predetermined criteria have been satisfied prior to providing the user with  
3 the information to be transmitted to the central server.

1           120. The system of claim 119 wherein the predetermined criteria includes a  
2 minimum user rating required to monitor the remote location.

1           121. The system of claim 117 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2 prevent the user from monitoring a remote location that is within a predetermined distance  
3 from the user's address.

1           122. The system of claim 117 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2 prevent the user from monitoring a remote location more than a predetermined number of  
3 times.

1           123. The system of claim 117 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2 prevent the user from monitoring a remote location during a predetermined period of time.

1           124.    The system of claim 117 wherein the processor is further configured to assign  
2   the remote monitoring task based on user-specified preferences concerning the shift.

1           125.    The system of claim 117 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2   determine an emergency procedure to be followed by the user in the event the user detects an  
3   emergency at the remote location; and transmit the emergency procedure to the user.

1           126.    The system of claim 117 wherein the processor is further configured to remind  
2   the user of the remote monitoring task prior to a start of the shift.

1 SUB A7) 127.    A system for managing remote monitoring tasks comprising:  
2                   a memory device;  
3                   a processor in communication with the memory device;  
4                   and the processor configured to:  
5                   determine a remote location to be monitored;  
6                   enable communication between a sensor at the remote location and a plurality  
7   of users of a data network;  
8                   determine an amount of time each user of the plurality of users has monitored  
9   the remote location; and

10 credit value to ~~at~~ least one of the plurality of users for monitoring the remote  
11 location.

1 128. The system of claim 127 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2 determine a shift for monitoring the remote location; and wherein the processor enables  
3 communication between the sensor and at least one of the plurality of users at approximately  
4 a start of the shift.

1 129. The system of claim 127 wherein the processor is further configured to recruit  
2 users to monitor the remote location.

1 130. The system of claim 127 wherein the processor is further configured to inform  
2 a user of the plurality of users that he is the only user monitoring the remote location.

1 131. The system of claim 127 wherein the processor is further configured to receive  
2 notification of an emergency at the remote location from a first user of the plurality of users;  
3 and contact a third party if at least a predetermined amount of the plurality of users reports  
4 the emergency.

1           132.   The system of claim 131 wherein the processor is further configured to inform  
2   a second user of the plurality of users of the notification of the emergency at the remote  
3   location.

1 SUBA8) 133   A system for managing remote monitoring tasks comprising:  
2           a memory device;  
3           a processor in communication with the memory device;  
4           and the processor configured to:  
5           receive a request from a user of a user device to monitor a remote location in  
6   exchange for value;  
7           determine a remote location to be monitored;  
8           enable communication between a sensor at the remote location and the user  
9   device for remote monitoring purposes; and  
10           measure user attentiveness while the user device is in communication with the  
11   sensor.

1           134.   The system of claim 133 wherein the user device is a personal computer.

1           135. The system of claim 133 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2 determine a shift for monitoring the remote location; and wherein the processor enables  
3 communication between the sensor and the user device at approximately a start of the shift.

1           136. The system of claim 133 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2 determine whether predetermined criteria have been satisfied prior to enabling  
3 communication between the sensor and the user device.

1           137. The system of claim 136 wherein the predetermined criteria includes a  
2 minimum user rating required to monitor the remote location.

1           138. The system of claim 137 wherein the minimum user rating is based on  
2 measured user attentiveness.

1           139. The system of claim 133 wherein the processor is further configured to credit  
2 value to a financial account of the user for monitoring the remote location.

1 SUBA9 } 140. The system of claim 133 wherein the processor is configured to measures user  
2 attentiveness by transmitting a test communication to the user at the user device; and  
3 determining whether a response to the test communication has been received within a  
4 predetermined period of time.

1 141. The system of claim 140 wherein the test communication is a predetermined  
2 video of an emergency.

1 142. The system of claim 140 wherein the test communication is a query.

1 143. The system of claim 140 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2 measure user attentiveness by determining whether the response is an expected response.

1 144. The system of claim 133 wherein the processor is further configured to receive  
2 a biometric measurement of the user; and measure user attentiveness based on the biometric  
3 measurement.

1 145. The system of claim 144 wherein the biometric measurement is a retinal scan.

1           146.   The system of claim 133 wherein the processor is configured to measure user  
2   attentiveness by enabling a second user to monitor the user monitoring the remote location.

1           147.   The system of claim 133 wherein the processor is further configured to cause  
2   an audible alarm to be transmitted to the user at the user device if the user is not attentive.

1           148.   The system of claim 133 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2   penalize the user if the user is not attentive.

1           149.   The system of claim 148 wherein penalizing the user includes paying the user  
2   only if the user is attentive.

1           150.   The system of claim 148 wherein penalizing the user includes crediting the  
2   user's account an amount that is less than if the user had been attentive.

1           151.   The system of claim 148 wherein penalizing the user includes charging the  
2   user's account.

1           152. The system of claim 148 wherein penalizing the user includes preventing  
2 future monitoring by the user.

1           153. The system of claim 133 wherein the processor is further configured to replace  
2 the user with an alternate user to monitor the remote location if the user is not attentive.

1           154. A system for alerting a user of a computer of an emergency at a remotely  
2 monitored location comprising:

3               a memory device;

4               a processor in communication with the memory device;

5               and the processor configured to:

6               maintain the computer in communication with a remote sensor;

7               transmit a signal indicative of a predetermined event detected by the remote  
8 sensor to the computer; and

9               transmit video data from a camera at the remotely monitored location to the  
10 computer,

11               wherein the signal causes the computer to preempt a program unrelated to  
12 remote monitoring to display the video data.



1 155. The system of claim 154 wherein the processor maintains the computer in  
2 communication with a remote sensor via a browser.

1 156. The system of claim 154 wherein the program is a word processor.

1 157. The system of claim 154 wherein the predetermined event includes at least one  
2 of a predetermined level of motion, sound, pressure and light intensity.

1 158. A system for alerting an individual of an emergency at a remote location,  
2 comprising:

3 a memory device;

4 a processor in communication with the memory device;

5 and the processor configured to:

6 transmit a signal indicative of a predetermined event detected by a sensor at  
7 the remote location to a television set; and

8 transmit video data from a camera at the remote location to the television set,

9 wherein the signal causes the television set to preempt a program to display  
10 the video data.

1           159. The system of claim 158 wherein the predetermined event includes at least one  
2 of a predetermined level of motion, sound, pressure and light intensity.

1           160. The system of claim 158 wherein the processor is further configured to  
2 transmit a signal to the television set which causes an alarm to issue to inform the user of the  
3 predetermined event detected at the sensor.

1           161. A system for alerting a user of a computer of an emergency at a remotely  
2 monitored location comprising:  
3           a memory device;  
4           a processor in communication with the memory device;  
5           and the processor configured to:  
6           maintain communication with a remote sensor via a central server;  
7           run a program on the computer, wherein the program is unrelated to remote  
8 monitoring; and  
9           pre-empt the program if a predetermined event is detected by the remote  
10 sensor.

1           162. The system of claim 161 wherein the processor maintains communication with  
2 the remote sensor via a browser.

1           163. The system of claim 161 wherein the predetermined event includes a  
2 predetermined level of motion or sound.

1           164. The system of claim 161 wherein the processor is further configured to receive  
2 video data from a camera at the remotely monitored location, and wherein preempting the  
3 program includes displaying the video data.

1           165. A system for a television set to alert an individual of an emergency at a remote  
2 location, comprising:  
3           a memory device;  
4           a processor in communication with the memory device;  
5           and the processor configured to:  
6           receive a signal indicative of a predetermined event detected by a sensor at the  
7 remote location; and  
8           in response to the signal, preempt a program to display video data received  
9 from a camera at the remote location.

1           166. The system of claim 165 wherein the predetermined event includes at least one  
2 of a predetermined level of motion, sound, pressure and light intensity.

1           167.   The system of claim 165 wherein the processor is further configured to cause  
2 an alarm to issue to inform the user of the predetermined event detected at the remotely  
3 monitored location.

1           168.   A method for a central server to manage remote monitoring tasks, comprising:  
2           receiving a request from a user of a user device to monitor a remote location;  
3           determining a remote location to be monitored;  
4           determining whether predetermined criteria have been satisfied prior to  
5 enabling communication between a sensor at the remote location and the user device;  
6           enabling communication between the sensor and the user device;  
7           measuring user attentiveness while the user device is in communication with  
8 the sensor for remote monitoring purposes; and  
9           crediting value to the user in accordance with an amount of time the user  
10 device has been in communication with the sensor for remote monitoring purposes.

1           169.   The method of claim 168 wherein the user device is a personal computer.

1           170.   The method of claim 168 wherein the user device is a television set.

1 171. The method of claim 168 wherein the request is received via at least one of the  
2 Internet, a wireless television network, and a cable television network.

1 172. The method of claim 169 further comprising the steps of:  
2 transmitting a signal indicative of a predetermined event detected by the  
3 sensor to the computer; and  
4 transmitting video data from the sensor to the computer,  
5 wherein the signal causes the computer to preempt a program unrelated to  
6 remote monitoring to display the video data.

1 173. The method of claim 170 further comprising the steps of:  
2 transmitting a signal indicative of a predetermined event detected by the  
3 sensor to the television set; and  
4 transmitting video data from the sensor to the television set,  
5 wherein the signal causes the television set to preempt a television program to  
6 display the video data.

1 SUBAID 174. A method for a central server to manage remote monitoring tasks, comprising:  
2 a memory device;  
3 a processor in communication with the memory device;  
4 and the processor configured to:

5 receive a request from a user of a user device to monitor a remote location;  
6 determine a remote location to be monitored;  
7 determine whether predetermined criteria have been satisfied prior to enabling  
8 communication between a sensor at the remote location and the user device;  
9 enable communication between the sensor and the user device;  
10 measure user attentiveness while the user device is in communication with the  
11 sensor for remote monitoring purposes; and  
12 credit value to the user in accordance with an amount of time the user device  
13 has been in communication with the sensor for remote monitoring purposes.

1 175. The system of claim 174 wherein the user device is a personal computer.

1 176. The system of claim 174 wherein the user device is a television set.

1 177. The system of claim 174 wherein the request is received via at least one of the  
2 Internet, a wireless television network, and a cable television network.

1 178. The system of claim 175 wherein the processor is further configured to:  
2 transmit a signal indicative of a predetermined event detected by the sensor to  
3 the computer; and

4 transmit video data from the sensor to the computer,  
5 wherein the signal causes the computer to preempt a program unrelated to  
6 remote monitoring to display the video data.

1 179. The system of claim 176 wherein the processor is further configured to:  
2 transmit a signal indicative of a predetermined event detected by the sensor to  
3 the television set; and  
4 transmit video data from the sensor to the television set,  
5 wherein the signal causes the television set to preempt a television program to  
6 display the video data.

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